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ANNUAL RAHM'S READERS SUMMER LEARNING CHALLENGE LAUNCHES AT CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY

*This year's challenge is super hero themed and will include STEAM activities
The program is open to children 13 and under*

Chicago Public Library (CPL) Commissioner Brian Bannon and First Lady Amy Rule today kicked off Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge, which will take place citywide in all 80 library locations. Rahm's Readers 2017 has a super hero theme and will engage students in learning and brain-stimulating activities. CPL and the City of Chicago are teaming up with the Museum of Science and Industry to challenge Chicago's children to read 20 minutes a day and participate in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) activities which are critical to the success of 21st century learners. The program is made possible by donations to Chicago Public Library Foundation.

"This summer, Rahm's Readers will encourage students become their own super heroes through continued reading and learning in the summer months," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "Students across Chicago will engage in various types of educational development, from critical thinking and creative activities to reading, keeping them prepared for success when school resumes in the fall."

Rahm's Readers was designed to prevent the "summer slide" where children can lose up to three months of math and science learning during summer months if they do not remain engaged in learning. Through CPL's strategic partnership with the Museum of Science and Industry, the Summer Learning Challenge embeds STEAM programming as a vital track of learning in the summer months. Program participants are encouraged to engage in various critical thinking, creation and design activities to encourage creativity, problem solving and persistence.

Rahm's Readers Summer Learning Challenge continues to receive national recognition. In 2015, Chicago Public Library was the first-ever winner of National Summer Learning Association's Founder's Award for Excellence, in recognition of the revamped Summer Learning Challenge. CPL is the only public library ever to win an award from the NSLA. Due to the program's success, CPL's Director of System Wide Children's Services Elizabeth McChesney co-authored "Summer Matters: Making All Learning Count" (ALA Publications, June 2017), a guide based on the Library's approach to summer learning with partner institution MSI.

“We are proud of our Summer Learning Challenge and the recognition it’s received,” said Commissioner Brian Bannon. “With support from the Chicago Public Library Foundation, our strong partnerships and innovative staff, we’re able to offer programming in all 80 branches to help Chicago kids in every neighborhood prevent summer slide.”

Additionally, Chicago Public Library and the Museum of Science and Industry earned a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grant for \$300,000 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This grant will support CPL and MSI's Summer Learning Challenge collaboration, allowing them to refine, document and share the highly effective professional development work they've built for and with CPL's children's librarians to deliver effective STEM programming.

The Summer Learning Challenge offers hundreds of interactive events for kids and families, led by partner organizations and librarians. The programming includes a range of science experiments, comics workshops, ballet and puppet shows, in-branch animal visits, concerts, story times and art projects. All registered Summer Learning Challenge participants ages 0-5 will receive a new book donated by KPMG. Kids ages 6-13 will be able to select 12 free books, courtesy of Bernie’s Book Bank through support from William Blair, at Community Days held at 19 CPL branches across the city.

This year, Mayor Emanuel is calling upon all children to stop the evil Dr. Brain-Drain. Participants will join the Super Explorers and create a super hero persona to explore the science and art behind their “super powers.” Rahm’s Readers Summer Learning Challenge is part of the Chicago Summer of Learning, which helps students to stay safe and engaged throughout the summer months. Each year, the Chicago Summer of Learning program allows young people ages 4 to 24 to access learning opportunities where they can earn digital badges and participate in the variety of educational experiences that Chicago has to offer.

The 2017 Rahm’s Readers Summer Learning Challenge is generously supported by donors to the Chicago Public Library Foundation, including the James & Madeleine McMullan Family Foundation, the Allstate Foundation, Boeing, Dr. Scholl Foundation, Helen M. Harrison Foundation, the Paul M. Angell Foundation, KPMG, William Blair, Macy’s Inc, RR Donnelly, PNC Bank, the Walter Heller Foundation, and Cubs Care, a fund of the McCormick Foundation. Complete program and sponsor information is available at chipublic.org/summer.

Partner organizations are Museum of Science and Industry, City of Chicago, Chicago Park District, Chicago Public Schools, and Art Institute of Chicago. Bernie’s Book Bank is the book distribution partner.

CPL Teen Services also offers Elevate Your Voice, summer programming for teens encouraging them to make a difference in their community. Complete information is available at chipublic.org/ElevateYourVoice.

Rahm’s Readers will run from June 19 to September 1.

About the Chicago Public Library Foundation

The Chicago Public Library Foundation was founded in 1986 as a true public/private partnership with the City of Chicago to ensure the margin of excellence for Chicago’s outstanding Library. Through the support of many civic-minded individuals, corporations and foundations, the

Foundation provides on-going funding for collections and a range of community-responsive programs, including Teacher in the Library, CyberNavigators, YOUmedia and One Book, One Chicago. Over the past 30 years, the Foundation has raised \$85 million in support for the Chicago Public Library. For more information, visit cplfoundation.org or call (312) 201-9830.

About Chicago Public Library

Since 1873, Chicago Public Library (CPL) has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services; was named the first-ever winner of the National Summer Learning Association's Founder's Award in recognition of its Summer Learning Challenge; and was ranked number one in the U.S., and third in the world, by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, visit chipublib.org.

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